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ABSTRACT

The handbook provides guidelines for regular and consulting teachers serving rural children with learning or behavioral problems. Mutual expectations of the classroom and consulting teacher are outlined. Guidelines and appropriate forms are provided for the following aspects of the program sequence: referral, observation, initial parent contact, referral conference, diagnostic teaching, planning conference, educational plan summary, the teaching learning plan, implementation, classroom teacher evaluation, and program evaluation and recommendations. (DB)

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CONSULTING TEACHER HANDBOOK

PREPARED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
GRIGGS, STEELE, AND TRAILL COUNTIES
SPECIAL EDUCATION BOARDS
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INTRODUCTION

During the past several years court decisions and Federal law have placed upon the public school systems the duty to provide educational services for all handicapped children in the least restrictive manner. Rural educational systems now developing special services for such children have a unique position of developing services that fulfill this requirement. Therefore, services must meet the requirements of the law and be efficient and reasonable for the limited finances and populations of rural schools, who can ill afford the tremendous expenses of traditional special education programs.

This handbook has been developed by the director and consulting teacher staff of Griggs, Steele and Traill Counties to assure that children with learning and behavioral problems have the right to "appropriate education" in the "least restrictive setting" (the regular classroom). This handbook defines professional roles and procedures used through the tri-county region to insure consistancy and continuity in a field of special education which at this time is experiencing rapid changes and turn-over in personnel.

It is not the intention of this handbook to be a complete and all encompassing work but rather to outline realistic roles and procedures resulting in the adaptation of the Diagnostic Presciptive Teacher service model of Frouty and Prillaman during the implementation and research of the 1975-76 school year that proved most effective at that time.

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Mutual support among the teacher, student, parent, and consulting teacher.
2. Cooperation in developing and implementing an appropriate educational program.
3. Dialogue on any observations or diagnostic sessions.
4. Maintenance of confidentiality and non-critical cooperative assistance.
5. Parent contact regarding findings, procedures, and recommendations for the child with the program.

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CONSULTING TEACHER

1. Assistance with determination where the teaching-learning plan process breaks down. (Insight into how the child learns and what is causing difficulty.)
2. Assistance with program modification in the classroom.
3. Resource person for materials and methods with possible group presentations.
4. Supportive follow-up on a periodic basis (daily, weekly, bi-weekly) for programs in progress.
5. On-going evaluation and modification of the programs.
6. Coordination of outside services.

CONSULTING TEACHER EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

1. Willingness to try new methods, materials, and classroom structure as the educational plan evolves.
2. Recognition and acceptance of responsibility for the child referred

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REFERRAL

ROLE

The role of the Consulting Teacher during this stage is to offer support (empathy, reinforcement, resources) to assist teachers in identifying and moving toward making decisions and solving problems related to meeting the needs of individual students.

STEPS

1. Initially, it is important that the CT be visible and available during the times teachers are free: before, after school, during lunch and/or during coffee breaks.
2. The CT should have Referral Forms on hand at these times, and also make them available at the office. Forms can be put in each teacher's mailbox, particularly if they were not distributed at the introductory inservice.
3. During initial contacts with teachers, the following behaviors are useful in securing referrals and establishing a working relationship:
   a. empathy in reflecting the teacher's concerns.
   b. directed questioning to move toward a specific, behavioral description of the priority problem.
   c. encouragement and reinforcement of the teacher's interest in cooperative problem solving.
   d. support in suggesting (or reflecting) one or two ways the CT might be useful.
4. The form may be completed by the teacher, with the CT assisting if necessary, at the time of the referral discussion.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES

REFERRAL FORM CT-1

Student_____Date_____

Teacher_____Grade_____School_____

Parent_____Address_____Phone_____

1. What is the problem?

2. What methods have you tried to solve the problem?

3. What do you see as the student's particular strengths?

4. When can we talk?

_____

Referring Teacher

cc: Spec. Ed. Director
Superintendent/Principal
CT

OBSERVATION

ROLE:

The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) in the observation step is to collect information regarding the specific problems and behaviors of the student as perceived by the teacher. The observation step also provides a means whereby the CT provides support for the teacher and assists in the clarification of the problem.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. Initially the CT should arrange an observation time with the teacher when the problem seems to be most visible.
2. After the initial observation, the CT should provide preliminary feedback on the observation in such a manner as to "open the door" if more analytic and intense observation is necessary. Brief, informal feedback should be given after each observation as soon as possible, preferable the same day.
3. The CT should be willing to discuss her/his observations in a non-critical manner with the classroom teacher at any time.
4. Observations should be written in behavioral terms at all times. No judgemental comments should be entered on paper.
5. All observations should include an analysis of interaction between (a) teacher-student; (b) student-student; (c) student-teacher. A suggested list of general topics to be considered in observation is as follows:

   (1) Physical Environment (class size, arrangement of room, etc.)
   (2) Observed Instructional Practices (tasks presented, method of presentation, materials used)
   (3) Interactional Behavior (antecedent behavior, actual behavior of student, response or consequences)

6. Observation notes should be written immediately after the observation NOT while in the classroom.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES

OBSERVATION NOTES CT-2

Student_____Observation #_____

Date_____Time_____Referring Teacher_____

1. Purpose of Observation:

2. Description of the Setting and Activity:

3. Notes:

4. Ideas and Next Step:

INITIAL PARENT CONTACT

ROLE: The role of the Consulting teacher (CT) during the initial parent contact is that of provider of information. The CT is required by law to provide parents with notification of individual evaluation and to request their permission for any special educational services. Parent permission must be given before any change in regular curriculum takes place.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. The initial parent permission letter may be sent at any point following referral. However, two copies of the letter must be returned by the parents before individual diagnostic teaching outside of the regular classroom can begin. A self-addressed, stamped envelope should be included with the parent permission letter, form CT-3.
2. One copy of the signed parent permission letter is retained by the CT (yellow) and the other is given to the school administrator (green).
3. If a parent permission letter is not returned promptly, a phone call should be made to clarify any questions that the parent may have.
4. If parents are reluctant to give permission for services, further clarification of the CT role may be necessary. It usually helps to stress particularly the consultation with the regular classroom teacher to provide the best methods and materials for (their child's) learning <u>in the regular classroom</u> and in appropriate instances,

consultation also with the Basic Skills staff to provide a coordinated educational program in (subject area) for (child). Further elaborations are at the discretion of the CT.

5. The classroom teacher may contact the parents regarding CT services before the parent permission letter is sent if he/she so desires.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-3

Date _____

Dear _____,

The _____Public School is offering the services of a Consulting Teacher (CT) to assist regular classroom teachers in developing instructional programs. This service provides materials and programming designed to meet specific educational needs. In order to plan an educational program for _____, it is necessary to determine her/his specific learning needs. This requires evaluation of _____educational needs and consultation with _____, _____teacher, to determine the most effective methods and materials to aid _____ learning in the classroom.

It is important that you are aware of and understand your rights in this matter. You may review all records related to the referral for CT services. You may refuse to permit these services. You have the right to be fully informed of the results of any evaluation when it is completed, and you have the right to an independent evaluation. _____ educational placement will not be changed without your full knowledge and written approval. You will receive a copy of the educational plan developed for your child.

Please sign and return the yellow, pink and gold forms by return mail. The white one is for your records. Should you have any questions, please call me at _____school on _____, phone _____.

Sincerely,

_____
Consulting Teacher

I request Consulting Teacher services for _____ as described above.

cc: Parent (white) Signed _____
School (canary) Date _____
CT (pink) Director (gold)

REFERRAL CONFERENCE

ROLE: The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during this phase of the model is negotiator. The CT negotiates with the referring teacher for a reasonable goal that flows from an objective, mutually acceptable assessment of a problem in an educational setting.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. The CT must frequently narrow the original presenting problem. Referrals such as "Low in all academic areas" or "Disruptive in the classroom" cannot be effectively planned for. Therefore questions such as "What academic or behavioral area is of greatest concern now?" help the teacher and CT pinpoint a specific problem. An example would be a referral such as "Johnny is disruptive and frequently disturbs the class with his behavior" could be narrowed to "Johnny does not ask permission to speak or leave his desk".

2. The tentative objective should be stated in positive behavioral terms. The CT should help the teacher transfer from the negatively stated problem pinpoint to a behavioral objective stated in positive terms. Questions such as "What should he be doing at this time?" or "What skills do you expect him to have by a given date?" help the teacher and CT pinpoint the stated objective. An example of this would be transferring from "Johnny doesn't ask permission to speak or leave his desk" to "Johnny will raise his hand when he wants permission to speak or leave the desk during class instruction or seat work. It is also during this time that tentative negotiations for appropriate accomodations are made. The above objective may include a second part that would allow

a hyperactive child a certain amount of freedom during appropriate times such as "Johnny will be free to leave his desk during specified times."

3. A few tentative strategies should be discussed. The CT may present a few ideas to allow the teacher and CT to discuss possible instructional alternatives. (This is an optional step because off the top of your head ideas are not always available).

4. The CT should clarify and schedule subsequent steps in the process necessary to take the program to Teaching/Learning Plan.

5. In the case of a child with multiple problems, the CT and teacher return to the referral conference after a preliminary Teaching/Learning Plan is underway. Here, the next problem and objectives are negotiated and steps begun for new planning.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-4

REFERRAL CONFERENCE NOTES

Student_____Referring Teacher_____

Conference Date_____School_____

1. Clarification of Problem:

2. Tentative Objectives:

3. Schedule for Next Steps:

cc referring teacher

DIAGNOSTIC TEACHING

ROLE: With the regular classroom teacher, the Consulting Teacher (CT) will decide the best arrangement for the diagnostic lessons. This process is conducted by the CT, referring teacher, and/or with the other personnel, with the child to determine successful teaching techniques and materials, based on the child's needs and strengths.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE: The CT, with the referring teacher, will have set up the date, time, size of group, and location for the diagnostic lessons.

Time

1. If the child is taken out of the classroom this should not deprive him of an activity he really enjoys unless a similar activity could be used in your diagnostic teaching session.

Grouping

2. A group of children may accompany the referred child.
3. If the child's problems are severe and need careful analysis, he may be taken individually for diagnostic sessions.
4. The referred child may remain in the regular class situation. The classroom teacher and/or CT could try various techniques with the help and guidance of the CT.

Setting

5. This session may be held in a corner of the regular classroom, perhaps separated from the rest of the class by a divider, or held out of the classroom in a quiet area (e.g., CT resource room, storeroom, vacant office, or corner of the library).

Session

The session should be clearly outlined by the CT before it begins, with a clear picture of the material, methods, and behavior techniques that he/she will use with the child or children. The following Form 5 may be used with each session to help the CT form a hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of the session. The number of sessions will vary depending on the success of the different methods used by the CT. The materials and methods used could involve subject areas, effective concerns, or behavior control of the referred child or the classroom of children.

Session Duration

Diagnostic sessions should not exceed one hour per day and should not exceed ten sessions.

DIAGNOSTIC TEACHING LOG CT-5

Student_____ Referring Teacher_____

Session Date _____ Time from_____ To_____ No._____

Other Children Present_____

1. Objectives:

2. Methods/Materials:

3. Evaluation and Next Step:

PLANNING CONFERENCE

ROLE:

The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during the planning conference step is one of disseminating and integrating information. He/she will work with the classroom teacher in formulating educational objectives (behavioral/instructional) and in designing strategies to meet the assessed needs of the referred student. The result of this decision-making process is a teaching/learning plan which has been formulated by the classroom teacher add the consulting teacher.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. The CT and the classroom teacher will first discuss and integrate the results of the diagnostic teaching and then relate this information to the student's classroom performance. Following this, they will make a summary statement concerning the child's entering behavior.

2. The CT and the classroom teacher will then discuss and decide on specific behavioral/instructional objectives for the referred student.

3. After formulating the specific objectives, the CT and the classroom teacher will discuss and decide on strategies (methods, materials, management procedures) to help the child and meet his needs.

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE PLANNING CONFERENCE

1. The CT should have an understanding of the student's problem and how it affects his classroom performance.

2. The CT should analyze the dynamics of the Teacher's attitude and the teacher-student interaction.

3. The CT should be prepared to arrange the conditions so that the classroom teacher has a willing attitude and want to help the child.

4. The CT should be prepared to present ideas which could be used in the classroom.

5. During the conference, the CT should be sensitive to the classroom teacher's actions and reactions so that he/she can provide the appropriate support and information in regarding the child and the program.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-6

PLANNING CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Student_____ Gaade_____ Date_____

Referring Teacher_____ School_____

1. Statement of Assessed Needs:

2. Conference Notes:

3. Next Steps:

EDUCATIONAL PLAN SUMMARY

ROLE: The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during the Educational Plan Summary Step is that of provider of information. The CT is required by law to provide the parents with a summary of the educational plan developed for their child and to receive parent approval before making any changes in the child's regular curriculum.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE.

1. When the teacher and CT have arrived at a mutually agreeable plan in the program planning conference, several people must be notified of the educational plan.

   This is a formal step primarily for the purpose of accountability to the parents, the school, the Special Education Director, and the CT. The Educational Plan Summary (EPS) is necessarily then designed to be more of an <u>outline</u> of broad goals including a general statement of the task area and type of improvement expected. (e.g. Johnny will efficiently use decoding skills in classroom reading. Johnny will demonstrate appropoiate classroom behaviors.) Most goals will contain some mention of maintaining the child in the regular classroom setting. The sample strategies should use brand names of materials, and/or general terms rather than specific minute by minute accounts of the teaching/learning processes. It is under the <u>guidelines</u> established in the EPS that the teaching/learning plan takes place. A listing of personnel involved in the program is also necessary in oddertfor both parents and administrators to see a cohesive, coordinated plan, involving perhaps not only the classroom teacher and CT, but other resources as well.

2. If only minor changes are being made in the methods and materials

used, then Form 8a enclosing the copies of the EPS would be necessary. (e.g. The child is already going to Basic Skills and that teacher is provided with some new materials or the only change needed is something given to the classroom teacher for use with the entire class.)

3. If the changes in the child's program involve curriculum changes for that child alone, referral to and/or programs with other professionals and para-professionals (i.e. medical personnel, counselor, Social Services, Mental Health Center, other teachers, teachers aides, high school tutors, etc.) then it is necessary to have a parent conference and signed approval before the plan may be implemented. This conference may include school administrators, classroom teacher, other professionals involved in the program and the local director of special education. The number of people involved would probably be in direct proportion to the extent of the program. To schedule this conference send form 8b to parents enclosing copies of the EPS and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If the bottom portion of the letter is not returned within a week, contact the parent by phone to schedule a conference.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-7

EDUCATIONAL PLAN SUMMARY

Student_____Grade_____Age_____

Referring Teacher_____School_____

Parent_____Phone_____

Consulting Teacher_____Date_____

1. Educational Goals: (Instructional/Behavioral)

2. Strategies used to achieve these objectives: (Methods/Materials/ Management)

3. Personnel Involved:

I give my permission for this plan to be implemented.

Parent Signature_____

Date_____

cc Parent
Superintendent/Principal
Director of Special Education
CT

GST SPECIAL SERVICES GT-8a

Date_____

Dear _____,

Enclosed please find a summary of the educational plan developed for _____ by _____, consulting teacher; _____, classroom teacher; and _____. The white copy is for you to keep. Please sign and return the others for our records.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this plan, feel free to contact me at _____ School on _____ morning afternoon.

Sincerely,

_____
Consulting Teacher

cc Parents
CT

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-8b

Date _____

Dear _____,

Enclosed please find a summary of the educational plan developed for _____, by _____, consulting teacher; _____, classroom teacher; and _____.

Before this program can be implemented fully we must have your approval. We would like to discuss this plan and your child's progress with you. _____ morning / afternoon _____ would be best for me. Please return the lower portion of this letter with the time that would be most convenient for you. If another date would be better, please let me know when and where you might be contacted by phone so we can set a better date.

Thank you,

_____
Consulting Teacher

cc Parents
CT

Yes, _____ is fine with me.

I'll meet you at _____ School at _____ am / pm

No, that is not a good day. Please contact me at _____ phone _____ to set a better time.

Signed, _____

Date _____

TEACHING - LEARNING PLAN

ROLE:

The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during this stage is to provide a detailed description of the strategies decided on in the conference, as a guide to implementation. The plan serves to delineate and coordinate functions of personnel involved in implementation.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. The Ct integrates the information from the diagnostic lessons and the planning conference to list specific objectives and the appropriate strategies agreed upon to achieve each objective.
2. Each strategy should include a detailed description of sequence, time, specific materials, and procedures, so that each person involved has an explicit guide to implementation.
3. Copies of the Teaching-Learning Plan should be distributed to all personnel directly involved (teacher, Speech Therapist, aide, etc.)
4. Any changes made by implementers must be added to the plan and dated, providing a record of strategy development.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-9

TEACHING-LEARNING PLAN

Student_____ Date_____

Referring Teacher_____ School_____

1. Objective (s):

2. Procedure:

cc: Referring Teacher
CT
Other Implementers

IMPLEMENTATION

ROLE: The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during implementation includes both advocacy and cooperation with the referring teacher (and other involved staff) through reinforcement, encouragement, and critical evaluation of the program's success. The CT also negotiates with all involved staff appropriate modifications in a Teaching/Learning plan as needed

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. Initial implementation of a Teaching/Learning Plan should include CT demonstration of new methods, use of materials, and/or management procedures unless the regular teacher declines.
2. The CT should establish regular contact with all staff involved with the program. A regularly scheduled appointment is recommended to keep communication open between all people working with any plan. During these appointments, each involved person can express her/his opinion of the success of the program in meeting the objectives established in the Teaching/Learning Plan. It is important (especially with multi-problem children) to assess success only in terms of recorded objectives and not overall academic achievement, i.e. a program in spelling will probably have little effect on a child's problem with math.
3. Observe programs in action both to provide teachers with positive, concrete feedback and to help with the pinpointing of problem areas in the plan that have been brought up during conferences. However, <u>do not</u> wait

for a problem to arise before observing. Observing a successful program can provide positive feedback to both teacher and CT.

4. If modifications are decided on, one of four options is recommended for implementation.
   a. For a major modification, the CT may wish to reinitiate diagnostic lessons to check child's compatibility with the new plan.
   b. The CT may request that the teacher formally introduce the modifications in the form of a teacher implemented diagnostic lesson.
   c. The CT and teacher may decide together to informally introduce the modifications, if minor, without changing the Teaching/Learning Plan. The teacher would then record the success of the modifications.
   d. Unnegotiated teacher modifications should be noted, initialed, and dated on the Teaching/Learning Plan.
5. All major modifications must be reflected in a new Educational Plan Summary sent to parents and administrators.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-10

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

Student's name_____#_____

Date_____Conference With_____

School_____Grade/Subject_____

NOTES:

NEXT STEP OR MODIFICATIONS:

CLASSROOM TEACHER EVALUATION

ROLE: The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during this step is that of recipient of information. The classroom teacher evaluation provides accountability for the CT and the programs to the Superintendent/Principal, the Director of Special Education, as well as the teacher.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. After an educational plan has been in progress for about four weeks, the CT should give the Classroom Teacher Evaluation form to the referring teacher and any other personnel that have been regularly involved in the child's program.

2. The CT should fill out all identifying information at the top of the form, plus questions 1 and 2. The date of evaluation should be given as approximately 1 week after the teacher receives the form. Question 1, Restatement of the Problem, should come from the Referral Conference Form, when the Problem was pinpointed. Question 2, Restatement of Objectives, should come from the Educational Plan Summary, with the understanding that this is perhaps an intermediate evaluation (progress towards objective).

3. The teacher then fills out the rest of the form at her/his convenience and returns it to the CT.

4. If a teacher is reluctant to fill out the form or only does so inadequately, it may be necessary to go over the form with her/him; having them dictate it. It seems to help to make it clear to the teacher that he/she is not evaluated by what he/she writes and that it is only for you both to pinpoint where to go next. Only the program is being evaluated.

5. If the teacher indicates that there is an area needing further assistance, then the CT may go back to whichever step in the process is necessary.

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-11

CLASSROOM TEACHER EVALUATION

Note: This evaluation is to be completed by the referring teacher and any other personnel who have been regularly involved in the program.

Student_____School_____

Referring Teacher_____Grade/Subject_____

Consulting Teacher_____Date Referred_____

Teaching/Learning plan started_____Date of Evaluation_____

1. Re-statement of Problems:

2. Re-statement of objectives:

3. How do you assess the child's progress at this point?

4. What may the CT do to be of further assistance to you?

cc: Superintendent/Principal
Director of Special Education
CT

Signed:_____

Position:_____

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ROLE: The role of the Consulting Teacher (CT) during this step is that of negotiator. The teacher and CT must evaluate progress during the year in terms of objectives stated on the Educational Plan Summary. This will reflect progress toward the specific objectives stated in the Teaching/Learning Plan.

STEPS TO ACHIEVE:

1. Ct, referring teacher and other implementors of the program must meet at conclusion of the school year to discuss programming for the coming year.
2. Part one should include specific recommendations of methods and materials to be used in the coming year.
3. Part two should include management techniques that have been found to be effective. (i.e. types of personal attention needed by the student, suggested modifications of classroom environment, etc.)
4. Part three should be a mutual evaluation of the child's progress toward all of the Teaching/Learning Plan objectives (summarized in the Educational Plan Summary goals.)

GST SPECIAL SERVICES CT-12

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For _____ Schoolyear

Student _____ Grade _____ Age _____

Referring Teacher _____ School _____

Parent _____ Address _____

Consulting Teacher _____ Date of Report _____

1. Recommended methods and materials:

2. Management techniques:

3. Evaluation of goal achievement: